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A FEDERAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT GLOSSARY

1989

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National Archives And Records Administration
Office Of Records Administration
Agency Services Division

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PREFACE

This glossary was prepared to help Federal records managers communicate more effectively. Section I provides definitions of terms. Section II lists selected abbreviations and acronyms, along with their meanings.

Building the modern records management vocabulary is a dynamic process. The selection of terms for this glossary was based on their current relevance and usefulness to Federal records managers. As a result, the glossary includes terms from related disciplines such as ADP and information science, as well as those from traditional records management.

Future editions will delete any obsolete terms and include new terms and revised meanings for existing terms. Suggestions regarding any needed changes are welcome.

Richard A. Wire compiled this publication.

This glossary is one of many products and services available to Federal agencies from the Office of Records Administration of the National Archives and Records Administration. This office produces publications, posters, and regulations and provides training, informal guidance, and individualized assistance. For information on these products and services or for help with any records management question, please contact:

Records Administration Information Center
Agency Services Division (NIA)
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Washington, DC 20408

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A FEDERAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT GLOSSARY

Section I: Terms

ACCESS. (1) The availability of, or the permission to consult, records. (2) The ability or opportunity to obtain security-classified or administratively controlled information or records. *See also ADMINISTRATIVELY CONTROLLED INFORMATION, CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.*

ACCESSION. (1) The transfer of the legal and physical custody of permanent records from an agency to the National Archives. *See also BLOCK (1), PERMANENT RECORDS, TRANSFER (1).* (2) The transfer of agency records to a Federal records center for temporary storage. The agency retains legal custody of the records. *See also RETIREMENT, TRANSFER (1).* (3) The records so transferred.

ACCOUNTABLE OFFICERS' ACCOUNTS. Specified records accumulated by collecting, disbursing, and certifying officers and required by the General Accounting Office (GAO) for audit purposes. Also known as site audit records.

ACCRETION. Records adding to, or extending, a series or system of permanent records previously accessioned by the National Archives.

ACTION COPY. The copy of a document sent to the agency, office, or individual responsible for taking action. *See also COPY (1).*

ACTIVE RECORDS. *See CURRENT RECORDS.*

ADEQUACY OF DOCUMENTATION. A standard of sufficiently and properly recording actions and/or decisions. Derives from the legal requirement that agency heads "make and preserve records containing adequate and proper documentation of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions of the agency and designed to furnish the information necessary to protect the legal and financial rights of the Government and of persons directly affected by the agency's activities" (44 USC 3101). *See also DOCUMENTATION (1), RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS, RECORDS CREATION.*

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS. Records relating to budget, personnel, supply, and similar housekeeping, or facilitative, functions common to most agencies, in contrast to program records. *See also PROGRAM RECORDS.*

ADMINISTRATIVE VALUE. The usefulness of records in conducting an agency's current business. Includes fiscal value and legal value, which are usually analyzed separately when records are evaluated for disposition. *See also FISCAL VALUE, LEGAL VALUE.*

ADMINISTRATIVELY CONTROLLED INFORMATION. Privileged or other nonsecurity-classified information in records sometimes bearing designations, such as "For Official Use Only," to prevent its unauthorized disclosure. *See also CLASSIFIED INFORMATION, CLOSED FILE (2), DISCLOSURE-FREE EXTRACT.*

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS. *See REMOTE-SENSING IMAGERY RECORDS.*

AGENCY RECORDS OFFICER. *See RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICER.*

AGENCY RECORDS SCHEDULE. *See COMPREHENSIVE RECORDS SCHEDULE, RECORDS SCHEDULE.*

ALIENATION. Unlawfully transferring records or losing custody of them to an unauthorized organization or person.

ALPHABETIC-SUBJECT FILING SYSTEM. A classification system in which subjects are arranged in alphabetical order regardless of their relationship to one another. For example, the subjects "adobe houses" and "adrenalin" would immediately follow "administration."

ALPHA-NUMERIC FILING SYSTEM. A classification system in which letters are assigned to main divisions and numbers to subdivisions. For example, "P5" might stand for "Personnel—Employment."

AMERICAN STANDARD CODE FOR INFORMATION INTERCHANGE (ASCII). *See CODE (2).*

ANALOG. Representing data by measuring a continuous physical variable, such as the rotation of hands on a clock, in contrast to a digital clock. *See also COMPUTER, DIGITAL.*

APERTURE CARD. An 80-column tabulating sized card with a hole, or aperture, containing usually one frame of 35-mm microfilm. Generally used for engineering drawings, maps and charts, and x rays.

APPRAISAL. The process of determining the value and thus the final disposition of records, making them either temporary or permanent. *See also EVALUATION (1).*

ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING RECORDS. Drawings and related records depicting the concepts and precise measurements needed to plan and build static structures, such as buildings, bridges, and canals, as well as those needed to complete other public works projects and produce such objects as weapons and machines. Include design and construction drawings and related records. Also include computer-aided design (CAD), computer-aided manufacturing (CAM), and computer-aided engineering (CAE) system records that relate to architecture and engineering and need to be managed like other electronic records.

ARCHIVAL AGENCY. *See ARCHIVES (2).*

ARCHIVAL DEPOSITORY. *See ARCHIVES (3).*

ARCHIVAL MICROFILM. *See SILVER HALIDE FILM.*

ARCHIVAL RECORDS. *See ARCHIVES (1), PERMANENT RECORDS.*

ARCHIVAL REPOSITORY. *See ARCHIVES (3).*

ARCHIVES. (1) The noncurrent records of an organization preserved because of their continuing, or enduring, value. "National Archives of the United States" means those records that have been determined by the Archivist of the United States to have sufficient historical or other value to warrant their continued preservation by the Federal Government, and that have been accepted for deposit in the Archivist's custody. *See also PERMANENT RECORDS.* (2) The organization or agency responsible for appraising, accessioning, preserving, and making available permanent records. Also called archival agency. In the U.S. Government, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). When permanent records are transferred to the National Archives, they are placed in the custody of NARA's Office of the National Archives. (3) One or more buildings, or portions thereof, where permanent records are located after being accessioned by an archival agency. Also called archival depository or archival repository. *See also DEPOSITORY.*

ARCHIVES ADMINISTRATION. The management or direction of the program of an archival agency, including the following basic functions: appraisal, accessioning, preservation, arrangement, description, reference service, and such public programs as education, exhibits, and publications.

ARCHIVIST. A person responsible for, or engaged in, one or more of the functions listed under archives administration.

ARCHIVIST OF THE UNITED STATES. The head of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

ARRANGEMENT. In files management, the act or result of placing records in a particular order or sequence. *See also CLASSIFICATION (1), FILING, RECORDS MAINTENANCE AND USE.*

AUDIOVISUAL RECORDS. Records in pictorial or aural form, regardless of format. Include still photographs (or still pictures), graphic arts (posters and original art), motion pictures, video recordings, audio (or sound) recordings, and related records. *See also PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDS. RECORD COMPONENTS.*

AUDIT. *See EVALUATION (2).*

AUTOMATIC DATA PROCESSING (ADP). Systematically performing a series of actions with data by using automatic machines, primarily electronic digital computers. Also called automated data processing. Often used as a synonym for electronic data processing (EDP). *See also DATA PROCESSING, ELECTRONIC RECORDS.*

BLOCK. (1) One or more chronological segments of cutoff, or closed, records that are in the same series and are dealt with as a unit for disposition purposes, especially during the transfer of permanent records to the National Archives. For example, a transfer of records in 5-year blocks. (2) In electronic recordkeeping, a grouping of data stored as a unit on an external storage medium and dealt with as a unit by the computer for input or output. *See also ACCESSION, CUTOFF, PERMANENT RECORDS, TRANSFER.*

CARTOGRAPHIC RECORDS. Graphic representations at reduced scale of selected physical and cultural features of the surface of the earth and other planets. Include maps, charts (hydrographic/nautical, weather, and aeronautical), photomaps, atlases, cartograms, globes, relief models, and related records, such as field survey notes, map history case files, and finding aids. Also include digital cartographic records, such as geographic information system records, which are managed like other electronic records. *See also REMOTE-SENSING IMAGERY RECORDS.*

CASE FILES. Records, regardless of media, documenting a *specific* action, event, person, place, project, or other matter. Include personnel, project, and transaction files, which are types of case files.

CASE WORKING FILES. Background or support files, such as worksheets, questionnaires, rough notes, calculations, or drafts, used to prepare or analyze case file documents. Often bulky when in paper form. *See also WORKING FILES.*

CENTRAL FILES. Files accumulated by several offices or organizational units and maintained and supervised in one location. Also called centralized files.

CENTRAL PROCESSING UNIT (CPU). The computer component that actually performs a series of actions with data. *See also HARDWARE.*

CHARGEOUT. The act and result of recording the removal and loan of a document or a file to indicate its location. Usually involves the use of a form, such as OF 23.

CHARTS. *See CARTOGRAPHIC RECORDS.*

CHRONOLOGICAL (CHRON) FILES. *See READING FILES.*

CLASSIFICATION. (1) The process of determining the sequence or order in which to arrange documents. *See also ARRANGEMENT, FILE DESIGNATION.* (2) *See FILING SYSTEM.* (3) The process or result of identifying records containing national security information. *See also CLASSIFIED INFORMATION, DECLASSIFICATION.*

CLASSIFIED INFORMATION. Records or information requiring, for national security reasons, safeguards against unauthorized disclosure. *See also ADMINISTRATIVELY CONTROLLED INFORMATION, CLOSED FILE (2), DECLASSIFICATION.*

CLOSED FILE. (1) A file unit or series containing documents on which action has been completed and to which more documents are not likely to be added. (2) A file unit or series to which access is limited or denied. *See also ADMINISTRATIVELY CONTROLLED INFORMATION, CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.*

CODE. (1) *See FILE CODES.* (2) In electronic recordkeeping, a set of rules to convert data from one form of representation to another. Also called a computer code. Examples include ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange) and EBCDIC (Extended Binary Coded Decimal Interchange Code). (3) A systematically arranged collection of laws or regulations, such as the *United States Code* (USC) or the *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR).

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS (CFR). *See CODE (3).*

CODING. (1) The process of putting abbreviated file designations on documents. *See also FILE CODES, FILE DESIGNATION.* (2) The process of writing a computer program. *See also CODE (2).*

COMPACT DISK (CD). A relatively small optical disk on which text, data, sounds, visual images, and the like can be recorded digitally and then scanned, decoded, and transmitted by a laser beam to a computer monitor, television set, or playback device. *See also AUDIOVISUAL RECORDS, OPTICAL DISK.*

COMPACT DISK–INTERACTIVE (CD–I). A compact disk combining audiovisual, text/data, software storage, and retrieval capabilities. *See also COMPACT DISK, OPTICAL DISK.*

COMPREHENSIVE RECORDS SCHEDULE. A schedule or collection of schedules based on NARA-approved disposition authorities and issued as a directive or manual to cover all the records of an independent agency or department, or those of a bureau, service, or office within a department. Should also include instructions for nonrecord materials, whose disposition is based on agency needs. *See also RECORDS SCHEDULE.*

COMPUTER. An electronic device designed to accept data (input), perform prescribed mathematical and logical operations at high speed (processing), and supply the results of these operations (output). A digital computer processes data as numbers and includes mainframe computers, minicomputers, and microcomputers. In contrast, an analog computer represents data by measurable quantities, such as voltages. *See also ANALOG, DIGITAL, LOCAL AREA NETWORK, MAINFRAME COMPUTER, MICROCOMPUTER, MINICOMPUTER, OFFICE AUTOMATION.*

COMPUTER-AIDED DESIGN (CAD). *See ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING RECORDS.*

COMPUTER-AIDED ENGINEERING (CAE). *See ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING RECORDS.*

COMPUTER-AIDED MANUFACTURING (CAM). *See ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING RECORDS.*

COMPUTER-ASSISTED LOCATER (CAL) SYSTEM. A computer system that keeps track of documents as they circulate through an agency.

COMPUTER-ASSISTED RETRIEVAL (CAR). *See MICROIMAGING SYSTEMS.*

COMPUTER CODE. *See CODE (2).*

COMPUTER INPUT MICROFILM (CIM). Microfilm containing data scanned and converted for direct input into a computer.

COMPUTER OUTPUT MICROFILM (COM). Microfilm containing data converted and recorded directly from a computer. Generally used instead of hard copy printouts. *See also MICROIMAGING SYSTEMS.*

COMPUTER PRINTOUT. *See PRINTOUT.*

COMPUTER SYSTEM. A configuration, or working combination, of hardware, software, and data communication devices. *See also ELECTRONIC RECORDS, INFORMATION SYSTEM, SYSTEM MANAGER.*

CONSTRUCTION DRAWINGS. *See ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING RECORDS.*

CONTINGENT RECORDS. Records scheduled for final disposition after the occurrence of an event at some unspecified future time, such as the decommissioning of a vessel.

CONTINUED PRESERVATION. *See PERMANENT RECORDS, PRESERVATION, RECORDS.*

CONTINUING VALUE. The lasting value of records, especially of permanent records. *See also PERMANENT RECORDS.*

CONTINUITY REFERENCE FORM. A form, such as OF 22, used to replace a record that has been moved to another location in the file. Often indicates that correspondence has been brought forward from a cutoff subject file for attachment to correspondence in the current year's file.

CONVENIENCE FILES. Nonrecord copies of correspondence, completed forms, and other documents kept solely for ease of access and reference. *See also TECHNICAL REFERENCE FILES, WORKING FILES.*

COPY. (1) A reproduction of the contents of an original document, prepared simultaneously or separately and usually identified by function or by method of creation. Copies identified by function include action copy, information or reference copy, official file copy, reading or chronological file copy, suspense or tickler file copy, and stock copy. Copies identified by method of creation include carbon copy, electrostatic copy, mimeograph copy, and ribbon copy. (2) In electronic recordkeeping, the action or result of reading data from a source, leaving the source data unchanged, and writing the same data elsewhere on a medium that may differ from the source.

CORRESPONDENCE. Letters, postcards, memorandums, notes, telecommunications, and any other form of addressed, written communications that are sent and received. *See also GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE FILES, TRANSITORY CORRESPONDENCE FILES.*

CREATION. *See RECORDS CREATION.*

CROSS-REFERENCE. In files management, a finding aid, such as OF 21, directing a user from one place in a file to another when a particular document must be retrievable under more than one filing feature. *See also FILING FEATURE, INDEX (1).*

CURRENT RECORDS. Records necessary to conduct the current business of an office and therefore generally maintained in office space and equipment. *See also NONCURRENT RECORDS, SEMICURRENT RECORDS.*

CUSTODY. Guardianship, or control, of records, including both physical possession (physical custody) and legal responsibility (legal custody), unless one or the other is specified.

CUTOFF. Breaking, or ending, files at regular intervals, usually at the close of a fiscal or calendar year, to permit their disposal or transfer in complete blocks and, for correspondence files, to permit the establishment of new files. Case files are generally cut off at the end of the year in which the case is closed. Cutoff is sometimes abbreviated as COFF and is also called file cutoff or file break. *See also BLOCK (1).*

DATA. Symbols, or representations, of facts or ideas that can be communicated, interpreted, or processed by manual or automated means. Often associated with electronic data or with statistics or measurements. *See also INFORMATION.*

DATA BASE. In electronic recordkeeping, a set of data, consisting of at least one file or of a group of integrated files, usually stored in one location and made available to several users at the same time for various applications.

DATA BASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (DBMS). A software system used to access and retrieve data stored in a data base.

DATA ELEMENT. In electronic recordkeeping, a combination of characters or bytes referring to one separate item of information, such as name, address, or age.

DATA FIELD. A specific area of an electronic record allocated for a particular category of data, usually one data element, such as a name. *See also LOGICAL RECORD, RECORD LAYOUT.*

DATA FILE. *See FILE (4).*

DATA PROCESSING (DP). Systematically performing a series of actions with data. May be done by manual, mechanical, electromechanical, or electronic (primarily computer) means. Often used interchangeably with automatic data processing (ADP). *See also AUTOMATIC DATA PROCESSING (ADP), INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (IRM).*

DATA RECORDS. *See DATA, ELECTRONIC RECORDS.*

DATA SET. A group of related records that are organized and treated as a unit. Also used interchangeably with data file and data base.

DAY FILES. *See READING FILES.*

DECIMAL FILING SYSTEM. A system for classifying records by subject, developed in units of 10 and coded for arrangement in numerical order.

DECLASSIFICATION. The process or result of determining that information no longer requires classification for national security reasons. *See also CLASSIFICATION (3), CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.*

DELETING. The process of permanently removing, erasing, or obliterating recorded information from a medium, especially a magnetic tape or disk, which then may be reused. In electronic recordkeeping, sometimes called scratching or erasing. *See also DESTRUCTION.*

DEPOSITORY. A place where records are kept and made available for use. Also called repository. *See also ARCHIVES (3), RECORDS CENTER.*

DESCRIPTION. (1) In records management, the process of giving a written account of the contents and characteristics of a record series or system. (2) In archives administration, the process of preparing finding aids. *See also INVENTORY (3).*

DESIGN DRAWINGS. *See ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING RECORDS.*

DESTRUCTION. In records management, the major type of disposal action. Methods of destroying records include burning, pulping and selling, or salvaging the record medium. *See also DELETING, DISPOSAL, DISPOSITION, EMERGENCY DESTRUCTION.*

DIAZO FILM. In microform records, film containing images produced by exposing an emulsion of diazonium salts to ultraviolet light and then ammonia fumes for the purpose of copying a master microform. *See also MICROFILM.*

DIGITAL. Representing data as discrete variables in the form of numerical characters, as in a digital clock or a digital computer. *See also ANALOG, COMPUTER.*

DIGITAL ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING RECORDS. *See ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING RECORDS, ELECTRONIC RECORDS.*

DIGITAL AUDIO TAPE (DAT). *See AUDIOVISUAL RECORDS, ELECTRONIC RECORDS.*

DIGITAL CARTOGRAPHIC RECORDS. *See CARTOGRAPHIC RECORDS, ELECTRONIC RECORDS.*

DIRECTIVE. A written instruction communicating policy and/or procedure in the form of orders, regulations, bulletins, circulars, handbooks, manuals, notices, numbered memorandums, and similar issuances.

DISCLOSURE-FREE EXTRACT. A copy of a record that excludes all exempted information; that is, information deleted or otherwise concealed under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or the Privacy Act. Also called a public use file. *See also ADMINISTRATIVELY CONTROLLED INFORMATION.*

DISPOSABLE RECORDS. *See TEMPORARY RECORDS.*

DISPOSAL. (1) The actions taken regarding temporary records after their retention periods expire and consisting usually of destruction or occasionally of donation. *See also DESTRUCTION, DISPOSE, DISPOSITION (1), DONATION (1), FINAL DISPOSITION, TEMPORARY RECORDS.* (2) Also, when so specified, the actions taken regarding nonrecord materials when no longer needed, especially their destruction. *See also DISPOSITION (2).*

DISPOSAL AUTHORITY. *See DISPOSITION AUTHORITY.*

DISPOSAL LIST. A document providing one-time approval for the disposal of records no longer accumulating and having no further value. Now incorporated into an SF 115. *See also DISPOSAL (1), RECORDS SCHEDULE, STANDARD FORM 115.*

DISPOSAL SCHEDULE. *See RECORDS SCHEDULE.*

DISPOSE. To carry out disposal, which includes either the destruction or the donation of temporary records but not the transfer of permanent records to the National Archives. *See also DISPOSAL (1), FINAL DISPOSITION.*

DISPOSITION. (1) The actions taken regarding records no longer needed in current office space. These actions include transfer to agency storage facilities or Federal records centers, transfer from one Federal agency to another, transfer of permanent records to the National Archives, and disposal of temporary records. Disposition is the third stage of the records life cycle. *See also DISPOSAL (1), FINAL DISPOSITION, LIFE CYCLE OF RECORDS, RETENTION PERIOD, RETIREMENT, SCHEDULED RECORDS, SCHEDULING, TRANSFER, UNSCHEDULED RECORDS.* (2) The actions taken regarding nonrecord materials when no longer needed, including screening and destruction. *See also DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS (2), SCHEDULING.*

DISPOSITION AUTHORITY. (1) Legal approval empowering an agency to transfer permanent records to the National Archives or carry out the disposal of temporary records. Must be obtained from NARA and also, for certain records proposed as temporary, from the General Accounting Office (GAO). (2) The agency's approval of disposition instructions for nonrecord materials.

DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS. (1) Directions for cutting off records and carrying out their disposition in compliance with NARA's regulations. (2) Directions for screening nonrecord materials and carrying out their disposal when no longer needed by the agency.

DISPOSITION ITEM. *See ITEM (2).*

DISPOSITION PROGRAM. Policies and practices designed to achieve effective and efficient disposition of records by scheduling them, ensuring their proper storage, ensuring the prompt disposal of temporary records and the timely transfer of permanent records to the National Archives, and evaluating the program.

DISPOSITION SCHEDULE. *See RECORDS SCHEDULE.*

DISPOSITION STANDARD. *See RETENTION PERIOD.*

DOCUMENT. (1) Recorded information regardless of physical form or characteristics. Often used interchangeably with record. (2) An individual record or item of nonrecord material. *See also NONRECORD MATERIALS, RECORDS.*

DOCUMENTARY MATERIALS. A collective term for records and nonrecord materials that refers to all media on which information is recorded, regardless of the nature of the medium or the method or circumstances of recording. *See also FILES, MEDIUM, NONRECORD MATERIALS, RECORDED INFORMATION, RECORDS.*

DOCUMENTATION. (1) The act or process of substantiating by recording actions and/or decisions. *See also ADEQUACY OF DOCUMENTATION.* (2) *See DOCUMENT (1).* (3) Records, generally in paper form, required to plan, develop, operate, maintain, and use electronic records. Included are systems specifications, file specifications, codebooks, record layouts, user guides, and output specifications. *See also MASTER FILES, PROCESSING FILES, SOFTWARE.*

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS. *See RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS.*

DOCUMENTATION STANDARDS. *See RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS.*

DONATION. (1) In records management, the transfer of temporary records from a Federal agency to an eligible person or organization after the authorized retention period has expired. Requires NARA's approval. *See also DISPOSAL (1).* (2) In archives administration, the transfer from private sources to the National Archives of documents, including audiovisual materials, appropriate for preservation by the Government as evidence of its organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and transactions.

DUMP. In electronic recordkeeping: (1) The process of copying recorded information from internal memory to an external storage medium, such as a magnetic tape or a printout, for backup, analysis, or some other purpose. (2) The process of transferring recorded information from one storage device to another, such as from a disk to a tape. *See also PRINTOUT.*

DUPLEX-NUMERIC FILING SYSTEM. A system for arranging records by adding assigned numbers associated with subordinate headings to those associated with main headings. For example, 2 Communications; 2-1 Mail; and 2-1-1 Postage.

ELECTRONIC DATA PROCESSING (EDP). *See AUTOMATIC DATA PROCESSING (ADP).*

ELECTRONIC MAIL. The process or result of sending and receiving messages in electronic form via remote computer terminals. *See also TELECOMMUNICATIONS.*

ELECTRONIC RECORDKEEPING (ERK). The creation, maintenance and use, and disposition of records created and stored by using a computer.

ELECTRONIC RECORDS (ER). Records stored in a form that only a computer can process. Also called machine-readable records or ADP records. *See also AUTOMATIC DATA PROCESSING (ADP), COMPUTER SYSTEM, INFORMATION SYSTEM, OPTICAL DISK.*

EMERGENCY DESTRUCTION. Eliminating records under abnormal circumstances, as provided by law or regulations. These circumstances involve a state of war or impending hostilities and also a continuing menace to life, health, or property. *See also DESTRUCTION.*

EMERGENCY-OPERATING RECORDS. That type of vital records essential to the continued functioning or reconstitution of an organization during and after an emergency. *See also VITAL RECORDS.*

ENGINEERING RECORDS. *See ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING RECORDS.*

ERASING. *See DELETING.*

ESSENTIAL RECORDS. *See VITAL RECORDS.*

EXTENDED BINARY CODED DECIMAL INTERCHANGE CODE (EBCDIC). *See CODE (2).*

EVALUATION. (1) In records disposition, the process of assessing the value of records to recommend or determine their retention periods, making the records either temporary or permanent. *See also APPRAISAL.* (2) The inspection, audit, or review of records management programs, including records disposition, either by the agency or by NARA and/or GSA, to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

EVIDENTIAL VALUE. The usefulness of records in documenting the organization, functions, and activities of the agency creating or receiving them. Considered by NARA in appraising records for permanent retention. *See also INFORMATIONAL VALUE, PERMANENT RECORDS, RECORDS.*

FACILITATIVE RECORDS. *See ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS.*

FACSIMILE. (1) An exact copy of a document, drawing, photograph, or the like. (2) A method or device for transmitting such a copy via telephone or radio for reproduction elsewhere. *See also TELECOMMUNICATIONS.*

FAX. *See FACSIMILE.*

FEDERAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS CENTER (FARC). A superseded term. Now generally divided into a National Archives regional unit and a Federal records center (FRC).

FEDERAL INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS (FIRMR). Regulations on information resources management issued by GSA and applicable to Federal agencies.

FEDERAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS (FPMR). GSA regulations. The part formerly applying to records management has been superseded by the Federal Information Resources Management Regulations and NARA records management regulations.

FEDERAL RECORDS. *See RECORDS.*

FEDERAL RECORDS CENTER (FRC). A records center operated by NARA. *See also RECORDS CENTER, STANDARD FORM 135.*

FICHE. *See MICROFICHE.*

FIELD. *See DATA FIELD.*

FILE. (1) An accumulation of records or nonrecord materials arranged according to a plan. (2) A unit, such as a folder, microform, or electronic medium, containing such records or nonrecord materials. (3) Storage equipment, such as a filing cabinet. (4) In electronic recordkeeping, an organized collection of related data, usually arranged into logical records that are stored together and treated as a unit. *See also FILING.*

FILE BREAK. *See CUTOFF.*

FILE CODES. Numbers or symbols used to abbreviate lengthy file titles. *See also CODING (1).*

FILE COPY. *See COPY (1), RECORDS.*

FILE CUTOFF. *See CUTOFF.*

FILE DESIGNATION. A distinguishing symbol, subject, name, number, or date controlling the placement of a document in a filing system. *See also CLASSIFICATION (1), CODING (1).*

FILE GROUPS. *See FILE TYPES.*

FILE LAYOUT. *See RECORD LAYOUT.*

FILE PLAN. (1) *See FILING SYSTEM.* (2) A plan designating the physical location(s) at which an agency's files are to be maintained, the specific types of files to be maintained there, and the organizational element(s) having custodial responsibility. (3) A document containing the identifying number, title or description, and disposition of files held in an office.

FILE STATION. Any location in an organization at which records are maintained for current use.

FILE TYPES. Categories or classes of files. Include case, case working, general correspondence, reading, transitory correspondence, convenience, and technical reference files, along with vital records and special records. Each of these types is defined in this glossary.

FILES. A collective term usually applied to all records and nonrecord materials of an office or agency. *See also DOCUMENTARY MATERIALS, MASTER FILES, NONRECORD MATERIALS, RECORDED INFORMATION, RECORDS.*

FILES CUSTODIAN. The individual or office in charge of agency files. Often used interchangeably with records custodian. *See also CUSTODY.*

FILES INVENTORY. *See INVENTORY.*

FILES MAINTENANCE. *See FILES MANAGEMENT.*

FILES MANAGEMENT. Applying records management principles and techniques to filing practices in order to organize and maintain records properly, retrieve them rapidly, ensure their completeness, and make their disposition easier. *See also RECORDS MANAGEMENT.*

FILES MANUAL. *See DIRECTIVE.*

FILES OPERATIONS. *See FILES MANAGEMENT.*

FILING. Putting documents into their place in accordance with a plan, or filing system. *See also ARRANGEMENT, FILE, RECORDS MAINTENANCE AND USE.*

FILING FEATURE. A characteristic by which a document is filed and found, such as a number, date, title, name, or subject. *See also CROSS-REFERENCE.*

FILING SYSTEM. A set of policies and procedures for organizing and identifying files or documents to speed their retrieval, use, and disposition. Sometimes called recordkeeping system.

FINAL DISPOSITION. The end of the records life cycle in which temporary records are disposed of and permanent records are transferred to the National Archives. *See also DISPOSAL (1), DISPOSE, LIFE CYCLE OF RECORDS, PERMANENT RECORDS, SCHEDULED RECORDS, SCHEDULED TRANSFER, TEMPORARY RECORDS, UNSCHEDULED RECORDS.*

FINDING AIDS. Indexes or other lists, whether manual or automated, that are designed to make it easier to locate relevant files or retrieve information. *See also INDEX (2).*

FISCAL VALUE. The usefulness of records in documenting an agency's financial transactions and obligations. *See also ADMINISTRATIVE VALUE, LEGAL VALUE.*

FOLLOWUP FILES. *See SUSPENSE FILES.*

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY. *See ADMINISTRATIVELY CONTROLLED INFORMATION.*

FORM. (1) A document with a fixed arrangement of captioned spaces designed for entering and extracting prescribed information. Categories of forms include internal, interagency, public use, standard, and optional. (2) *See MEDIUM.*

FORMAT. (1) The shape, size, style, and general makeup of a particular record. (2) In electronic recordkeeping, the arrangement of data for computer input or output, such as the number and size of data fields in a logical record or the spacing and letter size used in a document.

FROZEN RECORDS. In records disposition, those temporary records that cannot be destroyed on schedule because special circumstances, such as a court order or an investigation, require a temporary extension of the approved retention period.

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION. The division of records into categories and subcategories to reflect the programs, activities, and transactions carried out by the organization accumulating the records.

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE FILES. Records arranged and filed according to their general informational, or subject, content. Mainly letters and memorandums but also forms, reports, and other material, all relating to program and administrative functions, not to specific cases. Also called central, correspondence, or subject files. *See also ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS, CORRESPONDENCE, PROGRAM RECORDS, READING FILES, TRANSITORY CORRESPONDENCE FILES.*

GENERAL RECORDS SCHEDULE (GRS). A NARA-issued schedule governing the disposition of specified records common to several or all agencies. *See also RECORDS SCHEDULE, STANDARD FORM 115.*

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (GIS) RECORDS. *See CARTOGRAPHIC RECORDS, ELECTRONIC RECORDS.*

GRAPHIC RECORDS. *See ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING RECORDS, CARTOGRAPHIC RECORDS.*

HARD COPY. (1) Recorded information copied from a computer onto paper or some other durable surface, such as microfilm. To be distinguished from a temporary image on a display screen and from the electronic information on a magnetic tape or disk(ette) or in the computer's main memory. *See also OUTPUT RECORDS.* (2) Recorded information copied from microfilm onto paper and made readable without a special device. (3) A paper record that may later be filmed or digitized.

HARDWARE. A computer system's physical equipment, including the central processing unit (CPU), control unit, memory, input/output devices, and storage devices. *See also CENTRAL PROCESSING UNIT, SOFTWARE.*

HIERARCHICAL SYSTEM. Any classification system in which records are arranged under primary (first-level) categories and then, as necessary, under secondary (second-level) and further subdivisions.

HOLDING AREA. Agency space assigned for the temporary storage of records after their cutoff and removal from office space but before their destruction or their transfer to a Federal or agency records center or to the National Archives. Also called staging area. *See also RECORDS CENTER.*

HOUSEKEEPING RECORDS. *See ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS.*

IMAGE MANAGEMENT. *See MICROIMAGING SYSTEMS.*

INACTIVE RECORDS. *See NONCURRENT RECORDS.*

INDEX. (1) A separate collection of cards, extra copies of documents, cross-reference sheets, or other forms arranged differently from the related record series to make it easier to locate relevant documents. *See also CROSS-REFERENCE.* (2) A manual or automated listing arranged differently from a related record series or system to speed retrieval of relevant files. *See also FINDING AIDS.*

INFORMATION. (1) Facts or data communicated or received. *See also RECORDED INFORMATION.* (2) In electronic recordkeeping, processed data. *See also DATA.*

INFORMATION AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT. *See INFORMATION MANAGEMENT, RECORDS MANAGEMENT.*

INFORMATION COPY. A nonrecord copy sent to individuals or offices interested in, but not acting on, a matter. *See also COPY (1).*

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT. The administration, use, and transmission of information and the application of theories and techniques of information science to create, modify, or improve information handling systems.

INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (IRM). The planning, budgeting, organizing, directing, training, and controlling associated with the creation, maintenance and use, and disposition of information and related resources. Includes data processing, telecommunications, and records management. *See also DATA PROCESSING, RECORDS MANAGEMENT, TELECOMMUNICATIONS.*

INFORMATION SYSTEM. The organized collection, processing, transmission, and dissemination of information in accordance with defined procedures. Often refers to a system containing electronic records. Sometimes called a record system. *See also COMPUTER SYSTEM, ELECTRONIC RECORDS, INPUT, OUTPUT, SERIES.*

INFORMATIONAL VALUE. The usefulness of records in documenting the persons, places, things, or matters dealt with by an agency, in contrast to documenting the agency's organization, functions, and activities. Considered by NARA in appraising records for permanent retention. *See also EVIDENTIAL VALUE, PERMANENT RECORDS, RECORDS.*

INPUT. In electronic recordkeeping, data to be entered into a computer for processing. *See also INFORMATION SYSTEM, OUTPUT.*

INPUT RECORDS. Nonelectronic documents designed and used to create, update, or modify records in an electronic medium; or electronic records containing data used to update a separate computer file. Sometimes called source records or source documents. *See also OUTPUT RECORDS, SOURCE DOCUMENTS.*

INSPECTION. *See EVALUATION (2).*

INTERACTIVE DISK. *See COMPACT DISK—INTERACTIVE (CD-I).*

INTRINSIC VALUE. In archives administration, the value of those permanent records that should be preserved in their original form rather than as copies.

INVENTORY. (1) A survey of agency records and nonrecord materials that is conducted primarily to develop records schedules and also to identify various records management problems, such as improper applications of recordkeeping technology. (2) The results of such a survey. (3) In archives administration, a type of finding aid for accessioned records. *See also DESCRIPTION (2).*

ITEM. (1) A document. (2) A separately numbered entry describing records on an SF 115, Request for Records Disposition Authority. Usually consists of a record series or part of an information system. *See also STANDARD FORM 115.*

LEGAL CUSTODY. *See CUSTODY.*

LEGAL VALUE. The usefulness of records in documenting legally enforceable rights or obligations, both those of the Federal Government and those of persons directly affected by the agency's activities. *See also ADMINISTRATIVE VALUE, FISCAL VALUE.*

LIFE CYCLE OF RECORDS. The management concept that records pass through three stages: creation, maintenance and use, and disposition. *See also DISPOSITION (1), FINAL DISPOSITION, RECORDS CREATION, RECORDS MAINTENANCE AND USE.*

LOCAL AREA NETWORK (LAN). A system for linking together computers, terminals, printers, and other equipment, usually within the same office or building. *See also COMPUTER, OFFICE AUTOMATION.*

LOGICAL RECORD. In electronic recordkeeping, a collection of related data elements, referring to one person, place, thing, or event, that are treated as a unit and have either a fixed or variable length. *See also DATA FIELD, RECORD LAYOUT, RECORDS.*

MACHINE-READABLE RECORDS. *See ELECTRONIC RECORDS.*

MAINFRAME COMPUTER. A large digital computer, normally able to process and store more data than a minicomputer and far more than a microcomputer, designed to do so faster than a minicomputer and much faster than a microcomputer, and often serving as the center of a system with many users. Also called a mainframe. *See also COMPUTER, MICROCOMPUTER, MINICOMPUTER.*

MAINTENANCE AND USE. *See RECORDS MAINTENANCE AND USE.*

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (MIS). (1) An organization's procedures for accumulating, processing, storing, and retrieving valuable information. (2) Management aided by automatic data processing (ADP).

MAPS AND CHARTS. *See CARTOGRAPHIC RECORDS.*

MASTER FILES. Relatively long-lived computer files containing an organized and consistent set of complete and accurate data. Usually updated periodically. *See also DOCUMENTATION (3), PROCESSING FILES.*

MEDIUM. The physical form of recorded information. Includes paper, film, disk, magnetic tape, and other materials on which information can be recorded. *See also DOCUMENTARY MATERIALS, RECORDED INFORMATION, RECORDS.*

MEMORANDUM. A written communication much like a letter but having no salutation or complimentary ending. Usually used within or between offices of the same organization.

MICROCARD. An opaque card containing miniaturized pages photographically reproduced in a grid pattern by rows, like the numbers on a calendar.

MICROCOMPUTER. A very small digital computer, normally able to process and store less data than a minicomputer and far less than a mainframe while doing so less rapidly than a minicomputer and far less rapidly than a mainframe. Includes desktop, laptop, and hand-held models. Also called a personal computer. *See also COMPUTER, MAINFRAME COMPUTER, MINICOMPUTER.*

MICROCOPY. A photographic reproduction so small that a magnifying device is needed to read or view the image. Also called a microphotograph.

MICROFICHE. Miniaturized images arranged in rows that form a grid pattern on cardsize transparent sheet film. Usually contains a title readable without a magnifying device. Sometimes abbreviated as fiche.

MICROFILM. (1) Unexposed and unprocessed film suitable for use in micrographics. (2) High-resolution film containing microimages. *See also DIAZO FILM, SILVER HALIDE FILM, VESICULAR FILM.*

MICROFILMING. The process of recording microimages on film.

MICROFORM. Any form containing greatly reduced images, or microimages, usually on microfilm. Roll, or generally serialized, microforms include microfilm on reels, cartridges, and cassettes. Flat, or generally unitized, microforms include microfiche, microfilm jackets, aperture cards, and (opaque) microcards. *See also MICROIMAGE.*

MICROGRAPHICS. The practice of producing or reproducing information in miniature form.

MICROIMAGE. An image too small to be read without a magnifying device or other special equipment.

MICROIMAGING SYSTEMS. Systems constituting a bridge between traditional microforms and electronic records. Include stand-alone micrographics, computer-assisted retrieval (CAR), computer output microfilm (COM), electronic microimage transmission, and optical disk (OD) systems. Also called image processing or image management systems. *See also COMPUTER OUTPUT MICROFILM (COM), OPTICAL DISK (OD).*

MICROPHOTOGRAPH. *See MICROCOPY.*

MINICOMPUTER. A small digital computer, normally able to process and store less data than a mainframe but more than a microcomputer while doing so less rapidly than a mainframe but more rapidly than a microcomputer. *See also COMPUTER, MAINFRAME COMPUTER, MICROCOMPUTER.*

MNEMONIC FILING SYSTEM. A classification system in which records are coded by symbols to remind the user of the subject; for example, COM for communications and PER for personnel. These symbols are usually arranged alphabetically.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES. *See ARCHIVES.*

NEGATIVE FILM. Film in which the dark portions of the original image appear light and the light portions dark. Used as the master copy from which positive copies can be made.

NONCURRENT RECORDS. Records no longer required to conduct agency business and therefore ready for final disposition. *See also CURRENT RECORDS, PERMANENT RECORDS, SEMICURRENT RECORDS.*

NONOFFICIAL PAPERS. *See PERSONAL PAPERS.*

NONRECORD COPY. *See NONRECORD MATERIALS.*

NONRECORD MATERIALS. U.S. Government-owned informational materials excluded from the legal definition of records. Include extra copies of documents kept only for convenience of reference, stocks of publications and of processed documents, and library or museum materials intended solely for reference or exhibition. Also called nonrecords. *See also DISPOSITION AUTHORITY (2), DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS (2), DOCUMENTARY MATERIALS, FILES, PERSONAL PAPERS, RECORDED INFORMATION, RECORDS, TECHNICAL REFERENCE FILES, WORKING FILES.*

NONRECORDS. *See NONRECORD MATERIALS.*

NONTEXTUAL RECORDS. A collective term usually applied to electronic, audiovisual, cartographic, remote-sensing imagery, architectural, and engineering records, in contrast to manuscript and typescript paper records. *See also SPECIAL RECORDS, TEXTUAL RECORDS.*

NUMERIC-ALPHABETIC FILING SYSTEM. A classification system in which numbers are assigned to main divisions and letters and numbers to succeeding subdivisions and the records are arranged accordingly. For example, "1" might stand for "administration," "1C" for the subdivision "personnel," and "1C4" for the further subdivision "retirement."

NUMERIC FILING SYSTEM. Any classification system in which numbers are assigned to main divisions and subdivisions and the records are arranged accordingly.

OFFER. A term formerly used to describe the act of requesting NARA's one-time approval of the immediate transfer of unscheduled records to the National Archives ("direct offer") or the act of initiating the transfer to the National Archives of records already scheduled as permanent ("scheduled offer"). Direct offers have been discontinued, and scheduled offers are now called scheduled transfers. *See also TRANSFER, SCHEDULED TRANSFER.*

OFFICE AUTOMATION (OA). The use of automated or electronic equipment, such as computers, for office operations. *See also COMPUTER, LOCAL AREA NETWORK, WORD PROCESSING.*

OFFICIAL FILE COPY. *See COPY (1), RECORDS.*

OFFICIAL FILES. *See RECORDS.*

OFFICIAL RECORD COPY. *See COPY (1), RECORDS.*

OFFICIAL RECORDS. *See RECORDS.*

OPTICAL CHARACTER RECOGNITION (OCR). A method of entering data into a computer by using an optical scanning device to read the contents of documents.

OPTICAL DISK (OD). A noncontact, random-access disk tracked by optical laser beams and used for mass storage and retrieval of digitized text and graphics. Sometimes called an optical digital disk or optical digital data disk. Types include WORM (write once read many), CD-ROM (compact disk—read only memory), and CD-I (compact disk—interactive), and erasable optical disks. *See also COMPACT DISK (CD), COMPACT DISK-INTERACTIVE (CD-I), ELECTRONIC RECORDS, MICROIMAGING SYSTEMS, READ ONLY MEMORY (ROM), WRITE ONCE READ MANY (WORM).*

OPTIONAL FORM (OF). A form developed by a Federal agency for use by two or more agencies and approved by GSA for nonmandatory use throughout the U.S. Government. *See also FORM (1), STANDARD FORM.*

OPTIONAL FORM 11, REFERENCE REQUEST—FEDERAL RECORDS CENTERS. A form that an agency may use to obtain reference service involving records it has stored in a Federal records center.

OPTIONAL FORM 21, CROSS-REFERENCE. *See CROSS-REFERENCE.*

OPTIONAL FORM 22, CONTINUITY REFERENCE. *See CONTINUITY REFERENCE FORM.*

OPTIONAL FORM 23, CHARGEOUT RECORD. *See CHARGEOUT.*

ORAL HISTORY MATERIALS. All documents, regardless of media, relating to interviews conducted expressly for historical purposes by, or on behalf of, an agency.

OUTPUT. In electronic recordkeeping, information transmitted from internal to external units of a computer, or to an outside medium. *See also INFORMATION SYSTEM, INPUT.*

OUTPUT RECORDS. In electronic recordkeeping, information generated by a computer and placed on an outside medium, such as paper, microform, or an electronic storage medium. *See also HARD COPY, INPUT RECORDS.*

PAPER. *See MEDIUM.*

PAPERS. *See PERSONAL PAPERS, RECORDS.*

PAPERWORK MANAGEMENT. *See RECORDS MANAGEMENT.*

PERMANENT RECORDS. Records appraised by NARA as having sufficient historical or other value to warrant continued preservation by the Federal Government beyond the time they are needed for administrative, legal, or fiscal purposes. Sometimes called archival records. *See also ARCHIVES (1), BLOCK (1), EVIDENTIAL VALUE, FINAL DISPOSITION, INFORMATIONAL VALUE, NONCURRENT RECORDS, SCHEDULED TRANSFER, STANDARD FORM 258, TEMPORARY RECORDS.*

PERSONAL COMPUTER (PC). *See MICROCOMPUTER.*

PERSONAL PAPERS. Nonofficial, or private, papers relating solely to an individual's own affairs. Must be clearly designated as such and kept separate from the agency's records. Also called personal files or personal records. *See also NONRECORD MATERIALS, RECORDS.*

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDS. Records taking the form of pictures, or photographs, sometimes with related textual records. *See also AUDIO-VISUAL RECORDS.*

PHYSICAL CUSTODY. *See CUSTODY.*

POSITIVE FILM. Film in which the dark portions of the original image appear dark and the light portions light.

PRESERVATION. (1) The provision of adequate facilities to protect, care for, or maintain records. (2) Specific measures, individual and collective, undertaken to maintain, repair, restore, or protect records. *See also RECORDS MAINTENANCE AND USE.*

PRESIDENTIAL RECORDS. According to 44 USC 2201, the term "means documentary materials, or any reasonably segregable portion thereof, created or received by the President, his immediate staff, or a unit or individual of the Executive Office of the President whose function is to advise and assist the President, in the course of conducting activities which relate to or have an effect upon the carrying out of the constitutional, statutory, or other official or ceremonial duties of the President." Excluded are Federal agency records (called "records" in this glossary), personal papers, stocks of publications and stationery, and extra copies of documents produced only for convenience of reference and clearly identified as such. *See also RECORDS.*

PRINTED RECORDS. Published materials, such as books and maps, or serial issuances, such as directives and press releases, produced by or for a particular agency, in contrast to extra copies kept in stock or distributed inside or outside that agency. *See also PUBLICATIONS, RECORDS, STOCK COPY.*

PRINTOUT. Output produced by a computer printer, generally on continuous paper sheets. *See also DUMP.*

PRIVATE PAPERS. *See PERSONAL PAPERS.*

PRIVILEGED INFORMATION. *See ADMINISTRATIVELY CONTROLLED INFORMATION.*

PROCESSED DOCUMENTS. (1) Documents other than publications produced by electrostatic, stencil, or other duplicating methods. (2) Documents prepared for use and/or storage.

PROCESSING. Handling files to prepare them for use and/or storage.

PROCESSING FILES. In records disposition, those data files comprising the life cycle of most computerized records before the production of a particular master file. Include work files, test files, input/source files, intermediate input/output files, valid transaction files, and audit trail files. *See also DOCUMENTATION (3), MASTER FILES, VALID TRANSACTION FILES, WORK FILES.*

PROGRAM MANAGER. An official responsible for overseeing an agency function, especially a unique function rather than a function common to many agencies. *See also RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICER, SYSTEM MANAGER.*

PROGRAM RECORDS. Records documenting the unique, substantive functions for which an agency is responsible, in contrast to administrative records. *See also ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS.*

PROGRAM REVIEW. *See EVALUATION (2).*

PROJECT FILES. *See CASE FILES.*

PUBLIC RECORDS. (1) In general usage, records accumulated by Government agencies. (2) Records open to public inspection by law or custom.

PUBLIC USE FILE. *See DISCLOSURE-FREE EXTRACT.*

PUBLICATIONS. Documents printed or otherwise produced for wide distribution inside or outside an agency. Include annual reports, brochures, pamphlets, books, handbooks, and maps. Also include instructional and informational materials in audiovisual form. According to 44 USC 1901, a U.S. Government publication is "informational matter which is published as an individual document at Government expense, or as required by law." *See also PRINTED RECORDS, STOCK COPY.*

PURGING. *See SCREENING (2).*

RANDOM ACCESS MEMORY (RAM). Computer memory used to process and store data that can be accessed directly rather than sequentially.

READ ONLY MEMORY (ROM). Computer memory whose contents cannot be changed by the user. *See also OPTICAL DISK.*

READING FILES. Outgoing correspondence records arranged chronologically, in contrast to those arranged by subject. Sometimes called chronological (chron) or day files. *See also GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE FILES.*

RECORD COMPONENTS. In records disposition, those elements of audiovisual, microform, and certain other special records, needed for long-term preservation and required or requested when permanent records are transferred to the National Archives. For example, record components for color photographs include the original color transparency or color negative, a captioned print, and an internegative if one exists. *See also AUDIOVISUAL RECORDS, SPECIAL RECORDS.*

RECORD COPY. *See RECORDS.*

RECORD ELEMENTS. *See RECORD COMPONENTS.*

RECORD GROUP. A body of organizationally related records established by an archival agency after considering the organization's administrative history and complexity and the volume of its records. NARA uses record group numbers to keep track of agency records during and after the scheduling process, including those transferred to Federal records centers and/or the National Archives.

RECORD LAYOUT. In electronic recordkeeping, a diagram or list of the contents of a logical record describing each data field's informational content, length, and position. Also called a file layout. *See also DATA FIELD, LOGICAL RECORD.*

RECORD MEDIUM. *See MEDIUM.*

RECORD SERIES. *See SERIES.*

RECORD SET. *See PRINTED RECORDS.*

RECORD SYSTEM. *See INFORMATION SYSTEM.*

RECORD VALUES. *See ADMINISTRATIVE VALUE, APPRAISAL, EVALUATION (1), EVIDENTIAL VALUE, FISCAL VALUE, INFORMATIONAL VALUE, INTRINSIC VALUE, LEGAL VALUE, PERMANENT RECORDS.*

RECORDED INFORMATION. Information placed on a medium, such as paper, computer disk, or microform, to be available for later retrieval and use. *See also DOCUMENTARY MATERIALS, FILES, INFORMATION, MEDIUM, NONRECORD MATERIALS, RECORDS.*

RECORDKEEPING. The act or process of creating and maintaining records. Assumes the need for their proper disposition. *See also RECORDS MANAGEMENT.*

RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS. Statements in statutes, regulations, or agency directives providing general and specific information on particular records to be created and maintained by the agency. Since each agency is legally obligated to create and maintain adequate and proper documentation of its organization, functions, and activities, agency recordkeeping requirements should be issued for all activities at all levels and for all media, and should distinguish records from nonrecord materials for agency purposes. *See also ADEQUACY OF DOCUMENTATION, RECORDS MAINTENANCE AND USE.*

RECORDKEEPING SYSTEM. *See FILING SYSTEM.*

RECORDS. According to 44 USC 3301, the term "includes all books, papers, maps, photographs, machine-readable materials, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by an agency of the United States Government under Federal law or in connection with the transaction of public business and preserved or appropriate for preservation by that agency or its legitimate successor as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the Government or because of the informational value of data in them. Library and museum material made or acquired and preserved solely for reference or exhibition purposes, extra copies of documents preserved only for convenience of reference, and stocks of publications and of processed documents are not included." *See also DOCUMENTARY MATERIALS, EVIDENTIAL VALUE, FILES, INFORMATIONAL VALUE, LOGICAL RECORD, MEDIUM, NONRECORD MATERIALS, PERSONAL PAPERS, PRESIDENTIAL RECORDS, RECORDED INFORMATION.*

RECORDS ADMINISTRATION. *See RECORDS MANAGEMENT.*

RECORDS CENTER. A facility for the low-cost storage and servicing of records pending their disposal or transfer to the National Archives. Includes NARA-authorized agency records centers and NARA-operated Federal records centers. *See also DEPOSITORY, FEDERAL RECORDS CENTER, HOLDING AREA.*

RECORDS CONTROL SCHEDULE. *See RECORDS SCHEDULE.*

RECORDS CREATION. The first stage of the records life cycle in which records are made (or received) by an office. *See also ADEQUACY OF DOCUMENTATION, LIFE CYCLE OF RECORDS, RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS, RECORDS.*

RECORDS CUSTODIAN. *See FILES CUSTODIAN.*

RECORDS DISPOSAL. *See DISPOSAL (1).*

RECORDS DISPOSITION. *See DISPOSITION (1).*

RECORDS DISPOSITION AUTHORITY. *See DISPOSITION AUTHORITY (1).*

RECORDS DISPOSITION PROGRAM. *See DISPOSITION PROGRAM.*

RECORDS DISPOSITION REQUEST. *See STANDARD FORM 115.*

RECORDS DISPOSITION SCHEDULE. *See RECORDS SCHEDULE.*

RECORDS LIAISON OFFICER (RLO). A person responsible for overseeing a records management program in a headquarters or field office in cooperation with the agency records management officer. *See also RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICER.*

RECORDS LIFE CYCLE. *See LIFE CYCLE OF RECORDS.*

RECORDS MAINTENANCE AND USE. Any action involving the storage, retrieval, and handling of records kept in offices by, or for, a Federal agency. This is the second stage of the records life cycle. *See also ARRANGEMENT, FILING, LIFE CYCLE OF RECORDS, PRESERVATION, RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS, RECORDS.*

RECORDS MANAGEMENT. The planning, controlling, directing, organizing, training, promoting, and other managerial activities related to the creation, maintenance and use, and disposition of records to achieve adequate and proper documentation of Federal policies and transactions and effective and economical management of agency operations. Also called records administration. *See also FILES MANAGEMENT, INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT, RECORDKEEPING.*

RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICER (RMO). The person assigned responsibility by the agency head for overseeing an agencywide records management program. Also called records officer or records manager. *See also PROGRAM MANAGER, RECORDS LIAISON OFFICER, SYSTEM MANAGER.*

RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM. A planned, coordinated set of policies, procedures, and activities needed to manage an agency's recorded information. Encompasses the creation, maintenance and use, and disposition of records, regardless of media. Essential elements include issuing up-to-date program directives, properly training those responsible for implementation, and carefully evaluating the results to ensure adequacy, effectiveness, and efficiency.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM DIRECTIVE. *See DIRECTIVE.*

RECORDS MANUAL. *See DIRECTIVE.*

RECORDS OFFICER. *See RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICER.*

RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE. *See RECORDS SCHEDULE.*

RECORDS RETIREMENT. *See RETIREMENT.*

RECORDS SCHEDULE. A document providing authority for the final disposition of recurring or nonrecurring records. Also called records disposition schedule, records control schedule, records retention schedule, or schedule. Includes the SF 115, the General Records Schedules, and the agency records schedule, which when completed becomes a comprehensive records schedule that also contains agency disposition instructions for nonrecord materials. *See also COMPREHENSIVE RECORDS SCHEDULE, DISPOSAL LIST, DISPOSITION AUTHORITY, FINAL DISPOSITION, GENERAL RECORDS SCHEDULE, SCHEDULED RECORDS, SCHEDULED TRANSFER, SCHEDULING, STANDARD FORM 115, UNSCHEDULED RECORDS.*

RECORDS SCHEDULE INSTRUCTIONS. *See DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS (1).*

RECORDS STORAGE FACILITY. *See ARCHIVES (3), HOLDING AREA, RECORDS CENTER.*

REFERENCE COPY. *See INFORMATION COPY.*

REFERENCE REQUEST—FEDERAL RECORDS CENTERS. *See OPTIONAL FORM 11.*

REMOTE-SENSING IMAGERY RECORDS. Aerial photographs and other visual images of the surface of the earth or other planets taken from airborne or spaceborne vehicles to evaluate, measure, or map the cultural and/or physical features of the landscape. Also include related indexes. *See also CARTOGRAPHIC RECORDS.*

REPOSITORY. *See DEPOSITORY.*

REPORT. A narrative, statistical, graphic, or other account of operations, conditions, or plans that is recorded on any medium for submission by one person, office, or organization to another. *See also RECORDS.*

REQUEST FOR RECORDS DISPOSITION AUTHORITY. *See STANDARD FORM 115.*

RETAINED RECORDS. In NARA's usage, older records in an agency's custody that are scheduled as permanent but overdue for transfer to the National Archives.

RETENTION. *See PRESERVATION.*

RETENTION PERIOD. The length of time that records are to be kept. *See also DISPOSITION (1).*

RETENTION SCHEDULE. *See RECORDS SCHEDULE.*

RETENTION STANDARD. *See RETENTION PERIOD.*

RETIREMENT. The transfer of records to agency storage facilities or a Federal records center. *See also ACCESSION (2), DISPOSITION (1), TRANSFER (1).*

RIGHTS-AND-INTERESTS RECORDS. That type of vital records essential to protecting the rights and interests of an organization and of the individuals directly affected by its activities. *See also VITAL RECORDS.*

SAMPLING. Selection for retention of part of a body of similar records to serve as a representation of the whole body. Usually associated with scheduling case files.

SCHEDULE. *See RECORDS SCHEDULE.*

SCHEDULE INSTRUCTIONS. *See DISPOSITION INSTRUCTIONS.*

SCHEDULE ITEM. *See ITEM (2).*

SCHEDULED OFFER. *See SCHEDULED TRANSFER.*

SCHEDULED RECORDS. Records whose final disposition has been approved by NARA. *See also DISPOSITION (1), FINAL DISPOSITION, RECORDS SCHEDULE.*

SCHEDULED TRANSFER. The act or process of moving permanent records to the National Archives for preservation, as authorized by a NARA-approved records schedule and as implemented by NARA's approval of an agency-submitted Standard Form 258 and by NARA's receipt of the records. Formerly called a scheduled offer. *See also FINAL DISPOSITION, OFFER, PERMANENT RECORDS, RECORDS SCHEDULE, STANDARD FORM 258, TRANSFER.*

SCHEDULING. The process of developing schedules for the disposition of records, along with disposition instructions for nonrecord materials. *See also DISPOSITION, RECORDS SCHEDULE.*

SCRATCHING. *See DELETING.*

SCREENING. (1) Reviewing files to apply access restrictions. *See also ACCESS.* (2) Examining files to identify and remove documents of short-term value, especially those eligible for immediate destruction. Also called weeding or purging.

SECURITY-CLASSIFIED RECORDS. *See CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.*

SEMIACTIVE RECORDS. *See SEMICURRENT RECORDS.*

SEMICURRENT RECORDS. Records required so seldom to conduct agency business that they should be moved to a holding area or directly to a records center. *See also CURRENT RECORDS, NONCURRENT RECORDS.*

SERIES. File units or documents arranged according to a filing system or kept together because they relate to a particular subject or function, result from the same activity, document a specific kind of transaction, take a particular physical form, or have some other relationship arising out of their creation, receipt, or use, such as restrictions on access and use. Also called a record series. *See also INFORMATION SYSTEM.*

SILVER HALIDE FILM. In microform records, archival-quality film containing images produced by using light-sensitive silver halide crystals suspended in a gelatin emulsion. More precisely called silver gelatin film to distinguish it from dry silver film, which is of nonarchival quality. *See also MICROFILM.*

SITE AUDIT RECORDS. *See ACCOUNTABLE OFFICERS' ACCOUNTS.*

SOFTWARE. The programs used to operate a computer, as well as the documentation describing how to use them. *See also DOCUMENTATION (3), HARDWARE.*

SORTING. In files management, the process of separating records into groups for filing according to a classification system.

SOURCE DOCUMENTS. Documents containing data entered into a microform or electronic records system. Also called source records. *See also INPUT RECORDS.*

SOURCE RECORDS. *See SOURCE DOCUMENTS.*

SPECIAL RECORDS. Types of records maintained separately from textual/paper records because their physical form or characteristics require unusual care and/or because they have nonstandard sizes. Include electronic, audiovisual, microform, cartographic and remote-sensing imagery, architectural and engineering, printed, and card records. *See also NONTEXTUAL RECORDS, RECORD COMPONENTS, TEXTUAL RECORDS.*

STAGING AREA. *See HOLDING AREA.*

STANDARD FORM (SF). A form prescribed by a Federal agency and approved by GSA for mandatory use throughout the U.S. Government. *See also FORM (1), OPTIONAL FORM.*

STANDARD FORM 115, REQUEST FOR RECORDS DISPOSITION AUTHORITY. The form used by Federal agencies to obtain disposition authority from NARA for records to which the General Records Schedules are inapplicable. *See also DISPOSAL LIST, GENERAL RECORDS SCHEDULE, ITEM (2), RECORDS SCHEDULE.*

STANDARD FORM 135, RECORDS TRANSMITTAL AND RECEIPT. The form to be submitted by agencies to a Federal records center before transferring records there.

STANDARD FORM 258, REQUEST TO TRANSFER, APPROVAL, AND RECEIPT OF RECORDS TO NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF THE UNITED STATES. The form used by Federal agencies to transfer legal and physical custody of permanent records to the National Archives. *See also PERMANENT RECORDS, SCHEDULED TRANSFER.*

STOCK COPY. An extra copy of printed records or of other published materials. *See also COPY (1), PRINTED RECORDS, PUBLICATIONS, TECHNICAL REFERENCE FILES.*

SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM. A plan used for identifying and coding documents by topic to provide an orderly and accurate way of filing and finding. Examples include alpha-numeric, alphabetic-subject, decimal, duplex-numeric, mnemonic, and subject-numeric.

SUBJECT FILES. *See GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE FILES.*

SUBJECT-NUMERIC FILING SYSTEM. A subject classification system in which the main topics are arranged alphabetically and the subdivisions are coded numerically. For example, "Personnel 8" might stand for "Hours of Duty." This system may be modified by combining it with the mnemonic filing system so that, for example, "Personnel 8" would become "PER 8." *See also MNEMONIC FILING SYSTEM.*

SUBJECT OUTLINE. In files management, a list of topics arranged hierarchically (i.e., by primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary topics) and serving as the source for selecting file designations for arranging, or classifying, the documents of a subject file. Normally includes file codes.

SUSPENSE FILES. Files arranged chronologically to remind officials of actions to be completed by a specific date. Also called followup files or tickler files. *See also COPY (1).*

SYSTEM MANAGER. The person responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of a computer system. *See also COMPUTER SYSTEM, PROGRAM MANAGER, RECORDS MANAGEMENT OFFICER.*

TECHNICAL REFERENCE FILES. Nonrecord copies of articles, periodicals, reports, studies, vendor catalogs, and similar materials that are needed for reference and information but are not properly part of the office's records. *See also CONVENIENCE FILES, NONRECORD MATERIALS, STOCK COPY, WORKING FILES.*

TELECOMMUNICATIONS. The preparation, transmission, communication, or related processing of information by electrical, electromagnetic, electromechanical, or electro-optical means. *See also ELECTRONIC MAIL, INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT.*

TEMPORARY RECORDS. Records approved by NARA for disposal, either immediately or after a specified retention period. Also called disposable records. *See also DISPOSAL, FINAL DISPOSITION, PERMANENT RECORDS.*

TEXTUAL RECORDS. The term usually applied to manuscript and typescript paper records, as distinct from electronic, audiovisual, cartographic, remote-sensing imagery, architectural, and engineering records. *See also NONTEXTUAL RECORDS, SPECIAL RECORDS.*

TICKLER FILES. *See SUSPENSE FILES.*

TRANSACTION FILES. *See CASE FILES, VALID TRANSACTION FILES.*

TRANSFER. (1) The act or process of moving records from one location to another, especially from office space to agency storage facilities or Federal records centers, from one Federal agency to another, or from office or storage space to the National Archives for permanent preservation. (2) The records involved in such a relocation. *See also ACCESSION, BLOCK, DISPOSITION (1), RETIREMENT, SCHEDULED TRANSFER.*

TRANSITORY CORRESPONDENCE FILES. Correspondence relating to matters of short-term interest, such as acknowledgments for publications received, routine inquiries for publications, and announcements of savings bond campaigns, in contrast to administrative and program correspondence making up the general correspondence files. Also called transitory files. *See also CORRESPONDENCE, GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE FILES.*

UNITED STATES CODE (USC). *See CODE (3).*

UNSCHEDULED RECORDS. Records whose final disposition has not been approved by NARA. *See also DISPOSITION (1), FINAL DISPOSITION, RECORDS SCHEDULE.*

VALID TRANSACTION FILES. In electronic recordkeeping, files containing new data to be processed together with master files to create updated master files. *See also PROCESSING FILES.*

VESICULAR FILM. In microform records, film containing images produced by exposure to ultraviolet light and then heat for the purpose of copying the microform master. *See also MICROFILM.*

VIDEODISK. A disk on which pictures or pictures and sounds are recorded and stored as analog signals.

VITAL RECORDS. Records essential to the continued functioning or reconstitution of an organization during and after an emergency and also those records essential to protecting the rights and interests of that organization and of the individuals directly affected by its activities. Sometimes called essential records. Include both emergency-operating and rights-and-interests records. Recommended that these be duplicates, or extra copies, located off-site. *See also EMERGENCY-OPERATING RECORDS, RIGHTS-AND-INTERESTS RECORDS.*

WEEDING. *See SCREENING (2).*

WORD PROCESSING (WP). Creating and modifying documents by using a computer, along with other hardware and related software, instead of using a typewriter. *See also OFFICE AUTOMATION.*

WORK FILES. In electronic recordkeeping, temporary files in auxiliary storage. Sometimes called working files. *See also PROCESSING FILES.*

WORKING FILES. Documents such as rough notes, calculations, or drafts assembled or created and used to prepare or analyze other documents. Also called working papers. *See also CASE WORKING FILES, CONVENIENCE FILES, NONRECORD MATERIALS, RECORDS, TECHNICAL REFERENCE FILES.*

WRITE ONCE READ MANY (WORM). Of or relating to a type of optical disk on which information can be recorded only once but from which it can be retrieved and read many times. *See also OPTICAL DISK.*

Section II: Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADP	Automatic data processing or automated data processing.
AFFIRM	Association for Federal Information Resources Management.
AIIM	Association for Information and Image Management.
AIM	Associated Information Managers.
ANSI	American National Standards Institute.
ARMA	Association of Records Managers and Administrators.
ASCII	American Standard Code for Information Interchange.
CAD	Computer-aided design.
CAE	Computer-aided engineering.
CAL	Computer-assisted locater.
CAM	Computer-aided manufacturing.
CAR	Computer-assisted retrieval.
CD	Compact disk.
CD-I	Compact disk—interactive.
CFR	*Code of Federal Regulations.*
CIM	Computer input microfilm.
COFF	Cutoff.
COM	Computer output microfilm.
CPU	Central processing unit.
DAT	Digital audio tape.
DBMS	Data base management system.
DP	Data processing.
EBCDIC	Extended Binary Coded Decimal Interchange Code.
EDP	Electronic data processing.
ER	Electronic records.
ERK	Electronic recordkeeping
FARC	Federal Archives and Records Center. A superseded term. Now generally divided into a National Archives regional unit and a Federal records center.
FIRMR	Federal Information Resources Management Regulation(s). Issued by GSA.
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act.
FPMR	Federal Property Management Regulation(s). GSA regulations. The part formerly applying to records management has been superseded by the FIRMR and NARA's records management regulations.
FRC	Federal records center.

GAO	General Accounting Office.
GIS	Geographic information system.
GRS	General Records Schedule.
GSA	General Services Administration.
IRAC	Information Resources Administration Councils.
IRM	Information resources management.
LAN	Local area network.
MIS	Management information system.
NAGARA	National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators.
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration.
NARS	National Archives and Records Service. Now reorganized as NARA.
OA	Office automation.
OCR	Optical character recognition.
OD	Optical disk.
OF	Optional form.
OMB	Office of Management and Budget.
OPM	Office of Personnel Management.
PC	Personal computer.
RAM	Random access memory.
RLO	Records liaison officer.
RMO	Records management officer.
ROM	Read only memory.
SAA	Society of American Archivists.
SF	Standard Form.
SHFG	Society for History in the Federal Government.
USC	*United States Code.*
WORM	Write once read many.
WP	Word processing.

PUBLICATIONS

OFFICE OF RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

These publications are available from: Records Administration Information Center, Agency Services Division (NIA), National Archives, Washington, DC 20408. There is no charge, but quantities may be limited.

Evaluating Files Maintenance and Records Disposition Programs. A self-inspection guide for Federal agencies. A series of questions to help agencies evaluate filing and records disposition programs and practices. 1988 edition.

Evaluating a Vital Records Program. A self-inspection guide for Federal agencies. Explains how to assess the management of an agency's vital records, including both emergency operating records and records essential to protection of the rights and interests of the agency. 1983 edition.

General Records Schedules. These schedules provide disposition standards for records common to several or all agencies of the Federal Government. 1988 edition.

For the Record: Guidelines for Federal Records and Personal Papers. A brief introduction to Federal records, primarily for the use of newly appointed Federal officials. 1988 edition.

RECORDFACTS. Spells out basic recordkeeping responsibilities and lists sources of further information. 1986 edition.

Your Records and the National Archives. The pamphlet discusses the differences between storing records in a Federal records center and transferring them to the National Archives' legal custody. 1987 edition.

Records Management and the Law. A pamphlet that reviews the records management responsibilities that various laws assign to Federal agencies, including the oversight agencies. 1988 edition.

Instructional Guides

Each Instructional Guide deals with a specific type of record. Directed to Federal agencies, the guides emphasize identifying and managing permanent records, which are to be transferred to the National Archives. The guides discuss such topics as creating adequate and proper documentation of agency activities; setting up filing and retrieval systems; and ensuring suitable storage conditions.

Managing the Records of Temporary Commissions. 1989 edition.

Managing Audiovisual Records. Anticipated publication—Summer 1989.

Managing Cartographic, Aerial Photographic, Architectural, and Engineering Records. Anticipated publication—Summer 1989.

Managing Electronic Records. Anticipated publication—Fall 1989.

Records Management Handbooks

Case Filing. Provides Federal agencies with procedures and guidelines for managing case files. Describes how to plan their creation, maintenance, and disposition. Also discusses how to select related equipment and supplies. 1983 edition.

Disposition of Federal Records. Describes how to develop, implement, and evaluate records disposition programs in Federal agencies. Includes the texts of Federal laws and regulations affecting records disposition. 1981 edition.

File Stations. Explains how to establish and manage a coordinated network of file stations that will ensure better documentation and aid in records retrieval. 1980 edition.

Files Equipment and Supplies. Provides Federal agencies with guidance in the selection and management of equipment and supplies appropriate for use in filing and retrieving textual and nontextual records. 1981 edition.

Files Operations. Explains how to arrange and maintain records effectively and efficiently. Includes guidelines for files operations, rules and captions for alphabetic filing, and a glossary of files terms. 1981 edition.

Subject Filing. Explains how to arrange general correspondence and related records. Includes a model subject file classification system for administrative records common to most Federal agencies. 1981 edition.

Newsletter

RECORDFACTS UPDATE. A newsletter issued three times a year. Contains reports on records management activities of the National Archives and Federal agencies, a calendar of events, helpful hints, and other features.

Posters

1 **Our Records/Your Responsibilities.** Outlines the basic recordkeeping responsibilities of employees.

2 **The Written Word Endures.** A reminder of the importance of documenting meetings, telephone calls, and electronic mail communications.

3 **Celebrating the Bicentennial of the Constitution.** Reminds employees that the records they use today may be tomorrow's historical documents.

4 **The National Archives—Entrusted With the Record of Our Nation's Government.** Illustrates the various types and sources of records that become part of the National Archives.

5 **You Can't Take It With You.** Reminds departing officials not to remove Federal records.

6 **Organize Your Information.** Reminds employees that organized records help agencies provide good service. Anticipated publication—Summer 1989.

National Archives And Records Administration
Office Of Records Administration
Agency Services Division